



Cambridgeshire
County Council

Jigsaw

Issue 33 - February 2010

The Magazine for Early Years and Childcare Providers



Message from the Head of Early Years and Childcare

Cover photo:



Dear Colleague

Since arriving in Cambridgeshire in October, I've been overwhelmed by the warm welcome I have received, both from local authority colleagues

and from early years and childcare providers around the county. As I write, in early January, I feel I am getting to know the county and settling into my new role.

I have been fortunate to have had the opportunity to visit a number of settings and children's centres already and I have found these visits very interesting and informative. Thanks to all who have hosted visits, for taking the time to tell me about the work you are doing.

As you may know, the local authority is accountable to national government for children's outcomes in its area. This includes children's attainment, as measured at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Collectively, the sum of individual children's outcomes produces data known as the county's Foundation Stage Profile. Focussing on how we might improve the outcomes in the Foundation Stage Profile in

Cambridgeshire has therefore had to be my first priority since arriving in post.

High quality provision is essential in supporting good outcomes for children. The DCSF has produced a poster, 'What quality looks like...', to help practitioners to continue to reflect on the quality of their practice. For group settings, this A3 poster is enclosed with your copy of Jigsaw. It is also available to view or download on the Every Child Matters website:

www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters

(search on 'Early Years Magazine supplements').

In the course of this year I look forward to being able to widen my perspectives to take in the full diversity that makes up the early years and childcare picture across the county. I hope this will bring the chance to visit lots more settings and meet many more providers and practitioners.

Although the year won't be quite so 'new' by the time you receive this, please accept my best wishes for a happy and successful 2010.

Gill Harrison - Head of Early Years and Childcare, Children and Young People's Services

Support for Childcare in Cambridgeshire

Is your childcare provision making the most of the free support that is available from the County Council? Our Local Agreement for Early Years and Childcare Providers (2010 – 2011) will be circulated soon. Once you have signed and returned the Local Agreement Acceptance there are teams who are able to support you with all aspects of your childcare provision, including the following:

- Developing quality and embedding good practice
- Running your childcare business
- Support with employment and HR issues
- Staff training and qualifications
- Inclusion
- Support for children with additional needs
- Embedding EYFS
- Premises issues
- Expanding your childcare provision.

This list is by no means exhaustive and if you are looking for any support please speak to your Early Years Foundation Stage Adviser (EYFSA), Childcare and Playwork Adviser (CAPA) or Childminding Support and Development Officer (CSDO), who will be able to refer you on to the most appropriate team.

We are aware that there are several commercial companies with specialist services who are targeting childcare providers in the area. Some external services, support and training are very good value for money. However, we would urge you to check first whether you really need to pay for these services or whether you are able to access similar support for free. If signing up to any contracts or applying for funding please check the small print. Some funding is only available once per company so you need to ensure that you are making best use of it.

Cambridgeshire Children's Centres



"The role of children's centres is to improve outcomes for all young children... and to reduce inequalities."

Children's centres were launched in 2004, when the government announced a programme to create integrated service centres for children of pre-school age and their families. The national model established was for each centre to serve around 800 children aged 0-5 and their families, and for services to be within easy reach, hence the reference to a children's centre's 'reach' area, the geographical area which it serves. A reach area is not a formal catchment area, as parents can access services at the centre which is most convenient for them.

The role of children's centres is to improve outcomes for all young children, from birth to age five, and to reduce inequalities in outcomes between children growing up in disadvantage and the wider population. The centres provide a focus for multi-agency teams to deliver integrated services.

During the first two phases of development, 27 centres were created in Cambridgeshire. We are now in the third, and final, phase of development, establishing a further 13 centres by April 2010, giving a total of 40 centres throughout the county.

Children's centres provide the following 'core offer' of services:

- Drop-in activity for children, such as 'stay and play' sessions
- Information on childcare and early years provision
- Information and support to access wider services
- The offer of appropriate support and outreach to parents, carers and children in need
- Links with Jobcentre Plus to support work-related education and training
- Support for childminders, via a network or to individuals.

Centres in high-needs areas (North Cambridge, Huntingdon Town, Wisbech Town and Wisbech South) also provide integrated childcare and early learning.

In planning children's centres, services have been put in place to meet the needs of priority groups, including:

- Teenage mothers and pregnant teenagers
- Lone parents
- Fathers
- Children in workless households
- Children in black and minority ethnic groups
- Children with disabilities
- Children with disabled parents/carers
- Parents and children with mental health problems
- Travellers
- Families of prisoners
- Parents with drug or alcohol problems
- Families in temporary accommodation.

Children's centres, some of which are based in interim premises until building work is completed, are now open around the county as follows:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| • Huntingdonshire | 11 centres |
| • East Cambridgeshire & Fenland | 11 centres |
| • Cambridge & South Cambridgeshire | 18 centres |

A list can be found in the Families Information Service pages on the Cambridgeshire County Council website: www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/fis (follow link to 'Children's Centres'). For locations and contact details for these centres, please call Sally Gilson on 01223 699786.

Cambridgeshire Play Pathfinder Project

"In Wisbech,
the Adventure
Playground
project is really
beginning to take
shape."

The Cambridgeshire Play Pathfinder Project continues as 2010 begins. Department of Children, Schools and Children funding to the value of £2.5million is being put towards the development of local play spaces throughout the county, including a large adventure playground.

The eleven play spaces created in year one of the project continue to thrive and have been well received by the children, young people and local communities who have benefitted. The second year will see a further twenty plus play spaces completed.

So far, Play Pathfinder funding has been awarded to the following sites for 2009-2010 play space developments.

Barton	Horseheath
Papworth Everard	Coveney
Kingston	Somersham
Ely Country Park	Longstowe
Swaffham Bulbeck	Godmanchester
Mepal	Warboys
Hail Weston	Murrow
Wentworth	Histon & Impington
Offord Cluny & Offord D'Arcy	Wistow

The communities listed asked local children and young people to identify areas for improvement, choose ideal facilities and engage in thoughts as to what natural play opportunities they might wish to see in their new play spaces. This has led to a series of innovative and bespoke designs being produced. The finished spaces are certainly exciting prospects and are all set to be opened by March 2010.

Meanwhile in Wisbech, the Adventure Playground project is really beginning to take shape. A lot of consultation has been conducted around the town with children and young people within local schools, including the Meadowgate School. A big event was also held on the proposed site in the Waterlees area, where the designers were able to share initial ideas. This event also provided opportunity for families to engage in lots of activities such as drum workshops, rock climbing, hair braiding and circus skills.

There is still a lot of work to be done, but the construction of the Adventure Playground may have started by the time you read this. The proposed development will be an extraordinary space dedicated to play, set to feature self build areas, water play, a fire pit, double racing cable way and tower slide. Aiming High funding will add extensively to this facility by creating a highly inclusive environment suitable for all children and young people irrespective of their gender, age and/or ability.

Transition to Primary School – Support for Parents

Hello, my name is Fleur Kerrecoe and I am the Transition Information Adviser for Cambridgeshire.

You may previously have heard of Choice Advice, which is the former title for this role. Although we are often still referred to as Choice Advisers, Cambridgeshire decided to change the title to Transitions Information Adviser. The main reason for this change was the development of the role to include all school transfers, instead of just primary to secondary. The Transition Information Adviser can provide support for all parents when making all their school preferences: starting primary school, mid term transfers (changing schools during the school year), and the transition from primary to secondary school.

For parents, choosing which primary school they would prefer their child to attend is a very important decision. However, the information available is not always easy to understand and there are a lot of decisions to make and forms to fill in. The main focus of my job is to make the school admission process clear, fair and more equitable by supporting those parents and carers in most need of help, by providing impartial and independent advice about the primary school admission process.

There will also be parents who find the system difficult to navigate or who are reluctant to engage with it. So my aim is try to reach those parents and offer them support and advice to empower them to make informed and realistic choices about which

Transition to Primary School – Support for Parents ...continued

schools to apply for and ensure that their children have the same opportunities available to them.

Parents of children starting primary school in September 2010, who submitted an application form before the deadline in December 2009, will receive an offer of a primary school place on 26 April 2010. Unfortunately, there will be parents and carers who have not been offered a place at their preferred school. I am able to support parents with their appeal/review process by:

- providing information on the process
- supporting parents with the preparation of their appeal/review
- in certain circumstances, accompanying the parent/carer to the hearing.

I am based in the Parent Partnership Service (PPS) at Shire Hall, to ensure that I am kept at arm's length from the local authority. This means that the information and advice that I give is independent

and neutral. The work of the PPS is to provide help, advice and support to parents of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN). My colleague Peter Dawson is the Transitions Information Adviser for parents of children with SEN.

My role needs to reach out to parents and carers who would like advice with the school admissions process. I would like everyone to let parents and carers know that I am here to offer support and that I am very happy to come and meet them. I would appreciate information on any opportunities to meet parents or attend functions.

You can contact me on 01223 699194, email - transitioninfoadvice@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or log onto www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/education/parents/support/partnership/choiceadvice. Or write to me at: Transition Information and Advice, Parent Partnership Service, Cambridgeshire County Council, ELH1201, Shire Hall, Cambridge CB3 0AP

"I would appreciate information on any opportunities to meet parents or attend functions."

National Award Success



On Friday 25 September 2009, Ladybird Pre-school in Cottenham was awarded a Highly Commended runners-up position for "Pre-school of the Year" at the 2009 Nursery World Awards.

The Nursery World Awards recognise and highlight the best that is being achieved throughout the early years sector and they shine a light on the hard work, innovation and dedication of those in early years education and childcare.

The national awards ceremony and black tie dinner was held at London's Grosvenor House in Park Lane where the champagne flowed and all the finalists gathered to hear the results. Ladybirds was represented at the event by Rosemary Miller, Principal of the pre-school for the past 15 years, Louise Carter, outgoing Committee Chairperson and Paula Yardy, committee member.

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General News

National Award Success ...continued

"We are supported by a strong committee of parents who work with us on community initiatives and fundraising."

Rosemary Miller said, "It was an amazing ceremony, worth every penny it cost us to attend and very exciting to hear our name read out as Highly Commended runner-up to the Pre-school of the Year Award. It is rare to have the opportunity to be part of an event that wholeheartedly celebrates all the hard work and achievements of early years practitioners across the whole sector."

Nursery World praised Ladybird Pre-school on their involvement with village life, their work on improving links with the Traveller community, the good use they make of their garden and the importance they place on staff development. The latter has since been highlighted by an additional great achievement by one of the Deputy Principals, who heard just before Christmas that she had

gained her BA Degree in Early Years.

Rosemary Miller commented "The Ladybird Pre-school is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and we are thrilled that we have just successfully passed our 'Aiming for Quality' re-accreditation. We are supported by a strong committee of parents who work with us on community initiatives and fundraising and liaison between committee and staff is strong."

Everyone involved with, and connected to, the Ladybird Pre-school works hard to maintain its high standards as a facility of excellence for the whole community. It looks like a triple celebration needs to be planned to celebrate the run of success the setting has had!

Tax Credit Scam

The Early Years and Childcare Service has received reports of parents contacting childminders to ask for their Ofsted registration number so they can use it to claim tax credits, even when they are not using the provision.

This could also be happening in the case of settings, so all providers should be aware that parents may try to obtain this information for fraudulent purposes.

Development News

Data gathered, voucher won!

As part of Cambridgeshire County Council's responsibilities regarding childcare sufficiency cross-county, in September we asked all providers to fill in a web form giving details of an overall picture of their provision for one week. This form was made available via the Childcare Information Service (Opportunity Links) website. As an incentive the first 50 providers who entered their figures on to the web page were entered into a prize draw to win a £100 voucher.

Great Paxton Under 5's Pre-school was the lucky winner of the draw. Melanie Dingeman from the pre-school said: 'The easiest way to win £100 for my preschool! If only all data gathering forms were so easy. We are planning on buying a Digital Blue Camcorder for the children with it.'

Thank you to all those providers who filled in the form. The Childcare Sufficiency Team will use the data provided to update the Locality inserts of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, available at: <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/education/parents/childcare/sufficiency.htmplan>. This information is used to help us plan more accurately for development and sustainability needs in the county.

Data gathering will now be introduced on a termly basis during the NEF Headcount week. Staff from Opportunity Links are on hand to answer any queries you have when completing the form online. Please remember that, by signing the Local Agreement, all childcare providers have agreed to provide regular data as requested.

Development News

Needed: More Early Years Education Places in Cambridge City

The Childcare Development Team is currently using demographic data to profile the need for early years education places for the next few years. This is part of our responsibility with regard to ensuring "Childcare Sufficiency" across the county.

Demographic profiling and recent data gathering (see article on the winners of the recent prize draw, page 6), have shown very clear demand for more early years places (both sessional and full daycare) in Cambridge city, and this is a demand not currently matched by spare places.

There is significant business waiting in Cambridge city for any good quality childcare provider wishing to open or expand there.

We would like to encourage new providers wishing to open new settings in the city, as well as the expansion of existing provision. We can offer support in finding premises, developing a business plan, and marketing your new setting. Funding available from the Childcare Development Team could cover refurbishment of

premises, provision of new equipment, costs of additional staffing, and possibly capital funding to expand premises. For more information please contact your Childcare Development Coordinator on 01954 283373

In addition, Cambridgeshire County Council would like to encourage providers to visit the Childcare Information Service website www.opportunity-links.gov.uk on a regular basis, where specific opportunities for new development can be viewed. Jigsaw will continue to feature priority areas for the provision of additional early years education and/or daycare places.

With the need for more childcare places comes a need for more childcare practitioners with a variety of qualifications. The Childcare Careers Team is always available to offer confidential advice on career planning, qualification advice, study and interview skills, as well as job and work placement searches. They can be contacted on 01954 273371 or childcarecareers@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

"There is significant business waiting in Cambridge city for any good quality childcare provider wishing to open or expand there."

Our Second Sunflower

The Childcare Development Team is interested in supporting quality providers to expand their business by setting up in new areas. Here, Cambridge Housing Society relates its experience of opening a second nursery in a new Cambridgeshire community.

Cambridge Housing Society has owned and run Sunflower Nursery in Cambridge since 1991. As our name suggests, our main business is housing rather than nurseries. But for houses to feel like homes, people have to feel part of their local community. So, as well as providing houses we have always sought to contribute to local communities. We do this in a wide variety of ways, ranging from laptop loan schemes, financial advice, floating support services to children's day care nurseries. Our Cambridge nursery is sited



within a housing development. We are now a significant provider of housing within Cambourne, so when an opportunity arose to take over and run a nursery in Cambourne, and the Childcare Development Team advised us of a clear shortfall in childcare provision there, we felt that this was one way in which we could support and provide a service for the local community.

continued overleaf...

Development News

Our Second Sunflower ...continued

"Running two nurseries...provides very useful opportunities for sharing knowledge, experience and ideas between nursery managers and their teams."



We purchased the nursery in April 2008 and the nursery opened its doors to children and parents on 1 September 2008. A lot of work was done in the intervening weeks!

We were fortunate in being able to second one of our part time nursery managers to work three days a week on setting up the new nursery. We also set up an in-house project team to plan and carry out the many different things that needed to be achieved. There was much to be done – from developing staffing plans and recruiting a team, to redecorating and re equipping the nursery, and then of course to publicise it. The nursery building has the physical capacity to accommodate up to 100 children. We decided that initially we would staff the nursery for up to 40 children, increasing numbers of staff once numbers of children warranted this.

We were able to utilise all our experience in running Sunflower @ Cambridge when preparing to open our new nursery. We also now find that running two nurseries has led to some economies of scale, and provides very useful opportunities for sharing knowledge, experience and ideas between nursery managers and their teams.

Our new Sunflower @ Cambourne manager started two weeks before the new nursery opened, with the rest of the team starting a week prior to opening. This allowed essential induction information to be shared, allowed the team to begin to get to know each other and to get ready to welcome our first children.

Initially numbers attending the nursery were small. We were very grateful for the advice given by the Childcare Development Team. With their support we were able to apply for a grant to assist with



meeting running costs while numbers of children attending the nursery gradually built up.

Since then numbers have steadily risen. This has been at a steady but slower rate than we had hoped, but we have now reached a situation where we are taking on more permanent staff. In January 2009, at the request of the County Council, we opened a preschool room and were able to obtain grant funding to assist with the cost of equipping this. Numbers of 3-5 year olds have continued to grow and in January 2010 we are opening a second preschool room.

Balancing staff and numbers of children has proved one of the most difficult things to manage. We have tried many different sorts of publicity to inform and attract families – but consistently the vast majority of enquiries and applications come from people who know about the nursery by virtue of living in or visiting Cambourne. We have introduced various flexible care initiatives, again to see if we can adjust what we provide to match families' needs, and some parents have made good use of this.

Playing a part within the local community is a high priority for us. We have taken part in a number of community events e.g. we organised a games tent at the Cambourne Youth Fest, and a craft tent at the Cambourne Fête. We talked with schoolchildren about the challenges of working in childcare at the 'Make a Difference Morning' at the local Primary School, and have held our own 'Child's Eye View' exhibition of photos taken by our nursery children. We have a parents' group, who meet regularly, both to plan future social/fundraising events and whom we consult regarding the future development of the nursery.

Do You Have The Right Licences?

Do you play music or DVDs in your setting? If you do, the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 says that you must have a licence. Licences are issued by the Performing Rights Society (PRS) or Phonographic Performance Limited (PPL) for music and the Motion Picture Licensing Company (MPLC) for movies. If you do not have a valid licence appropriate to your setting's usage, you may be liable for a fine.

Childminders are exempt, as they work in their own domestic premises.

The Motion Picture Licensing Company (MPLC)

The MPLC licenses you for the playing of films in your setting, whether you do this once or twice a year or more frequently. This mostly applies to out of school clubs and holiday clubs, but also to pre-schools and day nurseries if they use films. Any playing of a film in these premises is considered a public performance, and requires a licence. A licence lasts for one year, and can be renewed automatically. It covers any legally-obtained DVD or downloaded film. There is an educational exemption, but this only applies to the use of films as part of an educational curriculum.

The licence fee depends on the number of children on the Ofsted registration document, and is currently £3.25 per child. Therefore for an average 24-place out of school club, the fee would be £78 per year.

Performing Rights Society (PRS) and Phonographic Performance Ltd (PPL)

There are two separate organisations that represent the music industry. PRS represents composers, songwriters and music publishers, whilst PPL represents record companies and performers. You are likely to need both types of licence if you play live music, CDs, tapes or radio, although the PPL licence is not required for general nursery/pre-school music. A licence allows you unlimited music performance, which also covers fundraising events.

The PRS gives discounts to registered charities, and bases its licence fee on the type of music and performance that you use. Each individual application is considered independently, and a figure of approximately £35 per year was quoted for a 24-place pre-school that regularly plays CDs and tapes. The PRS and PPL are piloting a combined licence which is to be launched in April 2010. Look out for further information on their websites. All three organisations have comprehensive websites (please see sidebar) and we recommend that you look at these for more information and to decide which licence(s) you need.

If you need further information, contact the Childcare Business and Employer Support (CBES) Team, Tel: 01954 284203 or email: childcarebusinessandemployersupport@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Contact details are as follows:

MPLC

www.mplcuk.com
Tel. 01323 649647

PRS:

www.prsformusic.com
Tel. 0845 309 3090.

PPL

www.ppluk.com
Tel. 020 7534 1000

Acas Guides

Acas (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) has made available a number of guides to help you to navigate your responsibilities as an employer. Publications include The A to Z of work, which offers informed advice and guidance on a number of issues from absence to written

statements. Other guides available include Discipline and Grievances at Work, Redundancy Handling and Employee Appraisals, all of which can be downloaded from the Acas website: www.acas.org.uk

Sickness Whilst on Annual Leave

Two recent rulings have addressed the issue of employees being ill whilst they are on annual leave and leave being carried forward to the next leave year. The European Court of Justice held that the right to paid annual leave continues to accrue during sick leave and that a worker could carry leave forward in to the next holiday year if they

were unable to take annual leave through no fault of their own.

It also held that a worker who is on sick leave during a period of previously scheduled annual leave has the right to reschedule their leave following their return to work.

Childcare Business and Employer Support News

Welcome!

"For support with

business or

management

issues, contact the

Childcare Business

and Employer

Support Team on

01954 284203."

The Childcare Business and Employer Support Team (CBEST) would like to welcome Faye Betts and Sarah Collinge to the team. Faye joins the team as a CBES Coordinator, and Sarah as a CBES officer.

Faye Betts: Prior to joining CBEST, Faye ran her own business. Faye has a sound knowledge of good business practice combined with experience of being Chairperson of a playgroup committee.

Faye said, "I am absolutely delighted to have joined the CBES team as a coordinator and I relish the opportunity of working with providers throughout Cambridgeshire. We have a fantastic team with an extensive knowledge base, covering a multitude of issues. I look forward to meeting you all in due course."

Sarah Collinge: Before joining CBEST, Sarah was employed as Deputy Play Leader for an out of school club and gained a great deal of knowledge in childcare from her role. She also has experience as Chair and Treasurer of a pre-school committee, and has an in depth understanding of the business management of early years and after school club settings.

Sarah said, "I am thoroughly enjoying my new position as CBES Officer and am thrilled to have joined such a wonderful team. I have already worked on some interesting referrals and I am really looking forward to supporting the settings throughout Cambridgeshire and to meeting you all".

If you require support with business or management issues you can contact the team on 01954 284203 or via referral from your adviser.

Childcare Vouchers to Stay

Tax relief on Childcare Vouchers won't now be scrapped following a pledge by the Government to maintain tax relief on the vouchers at the basic rate for all tax payers.

From April 2011 higher-rate tax payers joining a scheme will no longer receive 40% relief on vouchers but will benefit from the same relief as basic rate taxpayers. The change does not affect those currently in receipt of childcare vouchers, as

only those higher-rate tax payers joining a scheme from April 2011 will see the benefit halved.

The news prompted positive responses from childcare organisations and relief from parents and all providers who would have been affected. Childcare vouchers represent an important revenue stream for Cambridgeshire providers and a vital financial incentive for working parents.

New Committee Members Notification to Ofsted (EY3)

You should ensure that you complete a Notification to Ofsted (EY3) form with any changes to committee members, including new committee members, and changes of address for existing members. The notification also needs to be completed for changes in name/ address of the manager in charge of the day to day running of a childcare provision.

Once your AGM has taken place and committee members step down/are elected an EY3 form

needs to be completed and sent to Ofsted with accompanying EY2 applications for any listed new members.

This form and accompanying EY2's need to be completed and checked by either the outgoing Chairperson, re-elected Chairperson or the Manager of the setting (who would have current registration as a suitable person with Ofsted). You can download the form from the Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Childcare Business and Employer Support News

Management Matters

On 14 November 2009, the Childcare Business and Employer Support (CBES) Team held its annual conference "Management Matters". The day was a great success with over 80 delegates attending.

The keynote speech focussed on the new ISA vetting and barring scheme. The event, at the Oliver Cromwell Hotel in March, enabled practitioners to get up to date with the latest developments relating to the management of their setting and to meet and share good practice with each other.

Feedback from delegates attending the event was very positive.

Some comments from delegates attending the workshops:

"Found the information given very useful and understandable".

"Good fun and learnt a lot. Thank you".

"Topic that did not seem exciting was made extremely interesting and informative".

Thanks to all who attended! We look forward to welcoming you again next year.

"The toolkit helps us to address all of the issues needed to create a lease or licence."

User Agreement Toolkit

The Childcare Business and Employer Support Team has recently developed the User Agreement Toolkit to assist with creating a lease or licence for those settings occupying a Cambridgeshire County Council site. If your setting operates from any building or mobile that is on a site owned by the County Council, and you do not have a current lease or licence agreement, then this toolkit will help us to create one for you.

The toolkit helps us to address all of the issues needed to create a lease or licence. A lease or licence is the legal document that lays down the terms and conditions between the County Council and yourselves, and takes into account how long you may occupy the building, what services you

receive, and how much you will need to pay to maintain these services.

Until now, obtaining a lease has been a very lengthy process for settings, with considerable costs required to set up the legal documents. This new standardised toolkit allows for a much quicker and easier to understand process. It sets out everyone's liabilities and responsibilities.

If you occupy a building on a Cambridgeshire County Council site, for example, a school or children's centre, and do not have a current lease, send an email to the following address: childcarebusinessandemployersupport.gov.uk We will arrange to visit you to start working through the toolkit.

Workforce Development News

New Training Programme 2010-2011

We have now started preparing next year's Training Programme.

A lot of effort goes into organising and administering the courses and we are always looking for ways of improving our service, both in

what we offer and the procedures for booking on courses.

If you have any feedback or suggestions, please email eyctraining@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Workforce Development News

Children's Workforce Strategy – Early Years and Childcare Action Plan

If you are unable

to attend booked

training, please

contact the

Workforce

Development

Team on 01954

273355 / 273359.

This will enable

someone on the

waiting list to

attend.

The Workforce Strategy Action Plan for early years and childcare has been mentioned in previous 'Jigsaw' articles. The Strategy has four key themes;

- Inspiring leadership
- Integrated working
- Participation
- Ensuring capacity to deliver

This time there will be some more detail about the theme 'Ensuring capacity to deliver'.

During 2009-2010, work to support this theme is focusing on:

- Responding to Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) training audit which all settings are required to carry out
- Recruitment of staff into the profession,

including people from black, minority and ethnic groups, men and people with disabilities

- Recruit practitioners on the pathways leading to Early Years Professional Status
- Work with higher education to develop masters modules in early years
- Develop leadership and management training packages for committees
- Ensure there is sufficient high quality qualifications training and continuous professional development programme

Future Jigsaws will give you examples of how we have progressed with these tasks and describe the other key themes. For more information about Cambridgeshire Children's Workforce Strategy, see: www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/childrenyoungpeople/cws

What is an Early Years Professional?

To achieve Early Years Professional (EYP) status, a practitioner must have a degree and have been assessed on the EYP Standards.

The Government aims to have one EYP in every early years setting (full daycare) by 2015 and we have currently 24 EYPs working in Cambridgeshire settings.

You must have a degree before you can be assessed to go on a pathway to achieve the status. The different pathways will depend on your experience and your qualification.

The EYP is leading the practice in settings and does not need to be the manager, even if this is the case in some settings.

Financial support for graduate course fees for people working in early years settings is available from the Early Years and Childcare Service and the EYP pathways are government funded.

For more information, contact Childcare Careers Team on 01954 273371 or email childcarecareers@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Are You Complying With the Local Agreement?

All settings signed up to the Local Agreement should have a designated person for:

- Equalities (Equalities Named Coordinator / ENCo)
- Special educational needs (SENCo)
- Child Protection.

The Early Years and Childcare Service training programme offers courses at various times, dates and venues countywide to cover these roles and more.

Some of these courses have had to be cancelled due to low booking numbers yet our records show that a high number of settings do not have a trained designated person for all the required roles. Please make use of your Training Programme and get booking!

It is now even easier as the training programme and booking forms are available online at: www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/childcare (follow link to Childcare Training and Qualifications).

Workforce Development News

Early Years and Childcare Training Centre News

The Workforce Development Team is pleased to report on the outcome of our last inspection visit carried out by our CACHE Centre Advisor. The centre received Exemplary (grade 1) and this is down to all the hard work and enthusiasm of our Trainers and Assessors.

The team would also like to pass on congratulations to the following:

Janet Ritson (Training Officer)
On completing her Degree in Childhood Studies.

Judith Humphreys (Peripatetic Assessor)
On achieving her EYP status.

Well done to both!

We would also like to congratulate all learners who have achieved a qualification since the last edition of Jigsaw and it is very pleasing to see that many of you have opted to continue and further your training with us.

COURSES

As our courses have now started we would like to welcome all new practitioners who may be embarking on their first qualification and wish you all good luck in developing your knowledge and work practice.

Ongoing Courses

- NVQ levels 3 and 4 in Children's Care, Learning and Development
- Level 3 Diploma in Pre-School Practice
- Level 3 Certificate in Early Years Foundation Stage
- NVQ levels 2 and 3 in Playwork
- Level 3 Award in Playwork
- Level 3 Award in Management

Courses due to start after Easter

Level 3 Award in Early Years and Childcare for Playworkers

This course is suitable for Playworkers who hold a level 3 qualification recognised on the current occupational framework who wish to work in an early years setting.

Please note this may be the last opportunity to study for this award and the course will only run if there is sufficient demand.

NVQ Level 3 in Children's Care, Learning and Development

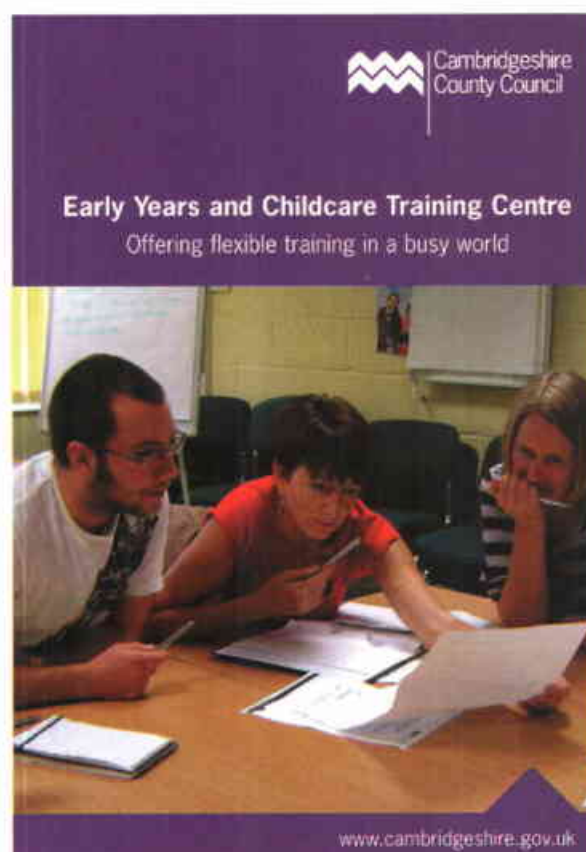
This course will provide practitioners with a work-based Level 3 National Vocational Qualification (NVQ), which reflects on the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to carry out their job efficiently within the workforce.

Candidates will need to be working with children and/or young people from 0-16 years in a childcare setting. It is important that candidates are working at a supervisory level and have experience of working within a childcare setting.

Further details of all our courses can be found in the Early Years and Childcare Training Programme. Alternatively please telephone Karen Millross on 01954 283424 or Elaine Renouf on 01954 273363 for more information.

The Early Years and Childcare Training Centre will be organising another open day in the summer term so watch out for the date in the next edition of Jigsaw.

If you are unable to attend booked training, please contact the Workforce Development Team on 01954 273355 / 273359. This will enable someone on the waiting list to attend.



Workforce Development News

Induction Training for Your New Staff

If you are unable
to attend booked
training, please

Staff induction takes place in many different ways depending on the workplace. In larger retail shops you would have a set amount of training before you are considered ready for the shop floor, while in smaller businesses you often have on-the-job training.

- **Module 3**

Complexities of Communication

- **Module 4**

Introduction to Safeguarding Children and Personal Safety

contact the

Working with children is a great responsibility and thorough induction is very important. There is now free inter-agency induction training for all staff working with children. If you work directly with children you would need to attend the following modules:

This training provides evidence for the Common Induction Standards assessment and will help managers to sign off all these criteria. This 3.5 day training programme and consequent assessment need to take place in the first 6 months of employment.

Workforce

Development

Managers' briefings are also provided to support the assessment of the Standards.

Team on 01954

273355 / 273359.

- **Module 1**

Who we are and what we do and why

- **Module 2**

Child and Adolescent Development

Details about this training can be found on <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/COTS>

This will enable

someone on the

waiting list to

attend.

Management Training

Free Training with Business Link

Business Link offers a number of business briefing sessions to the public around areas including,

- Sales and Marketing,
- Money and Finance,
- Complying with Legislation, and
- IT and E-commerce.

Log on to the Business Link booking website www.bookevents.org or call the Events Booking Service on 0845 601 1000 for further details.

Safe Recruitment Training

If you are involved in recruiting staff, the Childcare Business and Employer Support Team recommends that you attend Safer Recruitment

training to ensure that you have effective systems in place to safeguard children in your setting.

Details of the training can be found in the annual training programme on pages 69-70.

Apply using the booking form in the training programme booklet.

If you are currently recruiting staff and have not attended the training, the CBES Team is able to offer support, good practice tips and templates to ensure that you are operating an effective recruitment process.

For more information or to request support in recruiting staff please contact the team on: 01954 284203.

Mark Making Matters

As part of the ongoing strategy to improve Outcomes for Children in the Foundation Stage, the Early Years Foundation Stage Adviser Team is organising a series of essential training events for early years practitioners called '**Mark Making Matters**'. The training sessions will be centred where possible around the Practitioner Network Meetings, directly impacting upon the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile scores in local 'feeder' schools and helping children to achieve their full potential.

This essential training will help you to support children's spontaneous mark making efforts, enabling them to communicate their thoughts and ideas in a variety of ways, whilst promoting the development of early writing skills.

If key members of your team have not already attended this training, you are required to nominate a maximum of two people to attend. Your EYFSA network facilitator will contact you soon to advise you as to when the training event in your network will take place.

Building Futures: Developing Trust

'Building Futures, Developing Trust: a focus on provision for young children from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller backgrounds in the Early Years Foundation Stage' consists of a booklet and a DVD-ROM. The National Strategies, DCSF guidance invites practitioners across the range of early years settings to reflect on the quality of their provision for Traveller children and their families. Guidance is provided on learning and teaching approaches that will maximise the achievement of Traveller children.

The document stresses the importance of effective partnerships with parents, families and communities as well as exploring the conditions for learning and development that value diversity and promote self confidence. The DVD contains additional material illustrating effective practice.

The key principles:

- There are no inherent reasons why a child from a Gypsy, Roma or Traveller community should not achieve as well as any other child.
- Inclusive approaches, high-quality provision and assessment, plus appropriate specialist interventions, supported by strong leadership, will improve the achievement of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils.
- Achievement will only occur through the combined efforts of the setting, the child and home.

Why was this guidance published?

Data indicates that children from Traveller communities do less well than any other children, as a whole group, from the Early Years Foundation Stage onwards. The national data collected for FSP scores (now EYFSP) shows an overall gap between Traveller children and children from all other groups. For example, in 2008 the average score for children scoring 6+ in writing was 61%, whereas for Traveller children it was 25%.

The document:

- Is divided into the four EYFS themes with additional reading
- Uses case studies and points for reflection
- Has additional effective practice, challenges and dilemmas, and opportunities to reflect on practice

- Includes a DVD containing the cross phase and EYFS booklets, film clips and additional case studies
- Is intended to provoke discussion.

To receive a copy of the new document and find out more, come along to a half-day training delivered by Joe Bishop and Jane Choonara:

Huntingdon: Thursday 4 March 9.30-12.00

Cambridge: Friday 5 March 9.30-12.00

Fenland: Tuesday 20 April 9.30-12.00

For venues and booking details, please see flyer sent to your setting.

"Achievement will only occur through the combined efforts of the setting, the child and home."

The 'Building Futures: Developing Trust' document is available from www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications - search on the document reference DCSF-00741-2009



Equalities and Inclusion News

Lunar New Year: A Child's Eye View

"For me personally,
the most important
aspect is the
reunion dinner, the
night before
Chinese New Year."



The Lunar New Year is celebrated by many cultures, including China, Korea, Vietnam and Thailand. It is also sometimes marked by Christians from these cultures, without aspects of worship involved.

Growing up in Singapore, Chinese New Year was a special time to see my grandparents, aunts and uncles who lived on the west coast; and to then visit my godparents and old family friends on the eastern side of the island. In the hectic journey, we would also be able to catch up with various friends and family as they, too, turned up at the same houses.

The most important people to visit would be my grandparents, wishing them happiness and success for the year ahead. I would then wish all the adults there, starting with the eldest, calling them by their family titles. Children are taught to greet all family members older than themselves, e.g first uncle; first uncle's wife. All married adults are expected to give red packets of money (hong paos) to any children that greet them in the visits.

I grew up at a time when firecrackers were still legal in Singapore. My father would invest in buying rockets, and packets of large plain red crackers, where the fuses were all twisted together. These could be lit singly. One vivid childhood memory was of my father lighting the entire packet, tossing it in the air to make a bigger bang. There used to be a strong smell of gunpowder in the air, as well as shreds of red

paper, like fallen petals, strewn thick on the ground. Nowadays, there are organised fireworks in Singapore.

For me personally, the most important aspect of Chinese New Year, is the reunion dinner, the night before Chinese New Year. Just as in Britain, where families come home for Christmas, grown up children will start heading home for the Chinese New Year's Eve. There is another reunion dinner a fortnight later to round off the festivities. The end of Chinese New Year this year will be on 1 March.

Simple activities could be to

- Decorate the room with pussy willow in tall vases, pots of azalea, chrysanthemum or potted miniature oranges
- Eat mandarin oranges
- Ask a Chinese restaurant or takeaway to come in and do a little demonstration of Chinese culture for the children
- Ask a Chinese parent/contact to write the words "Happy New Year" in Chinese to pin up in the setting.
- Buy plain white Japanese lanterns, and paint them with pictures of pink plum blossom (black twigs and small pink buds) to hang as decoration.

Swee Kim Huen, Equalities Adviser

Support for Learning, Early Years Team: Portage

The three day Basic Portage Workshop was presented in November at the Children's Centre in March. There were fourteen participants from early years teams and settings from across the county. The course was presented by National Portage Accredited trainers, Liz Hunt (Deputy Principal Educational Psychologist for Cambridgeshire) and Jan Clifford (East Cambridgeshire and Fenland Portage Coordinator) and they were supported by an experienced Portage Worker, Chris Mackett. After the three days participants gained their Part One certificate for Portage work.

They gained an oversight in the Portage model of service delivery and covered topics including:

- Working in partnership with parents
- Planning, recording and sharing activities
- Long term and short term goals
- Using small steps
- Task analysis
- Understanding and responding to children's behaviour.

There was an optional fourth day when colleagues from Health presented.

If you are interested in attending please look out for flyers giving details of future courses.

"After the three days, participants gained their Part One certificate for Portage work."

Inclusion Development Programme: Supporting Children on the Autism Spectrum

This year the Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) is concentrating on supporting children on the Autism Spectrum. Three days of conferences on the IDP Autism spectrum were held during the autumn and were well attended.

The IDP suggests that settings use the booklet and accompanying DVD as part of the setting training on inclusion. On the DVD there is a self evaluation and all settings should look at this as a starting point to assess their needs. The booklet itself is user friendly and is based on the EYFS four areas.

The course defines 'Autism' and explains how through history the different terminology has evolved. Each chapter answers questions frequently asked by practitioners and includes ideas on how to become an inclusive setting. At the end of each of these chapters there is another section on reflective practice so the setting can check on the improvements/progress that have been made.

If you were unable to attend one of the conferences please inform your Area SENCo who will bring you the booklet when they next visit.

Rules for Club Rules! - Some Tips for Out of School Settings

Without rules, children cannot know what's expected of them. Rules should be established for several reasons, including to ensure the safety of everyone in the setting, to help things run smoothly, to reinforce appropriate ways of behaving and to make the club a more enjoyable place to be. The key to creating rules is to keep them few and simple.

- A maximum of five rules
- Must be agreed by all and used consistently
- Should be applicable to every situation, age appropriate, realistic, inclusive and worded positively
- They should be reviewed after each holiday
- Must be displayed where they can be seen by all
- Parents should be informed of the club rules

- Encourage children to draw pictures of the rules and have them clearly displayed
- Talk about them regularly
- Reinforce rules by positively acknowledging children that are following them
- Discuss the rationale to ensure the children understand and see the need for each rule.

Idea! Once the rules have been established, why not produce them on a handy card? Each child can sign their own copy which can act as a behaviour contract.

For further support around positive behaviour management and other inclusion issues, contact your Childcare and Playwork Adviser, who will make a referral to the Inclusion Team.

Equalities and Inclusion News

Teddy Bears Nursery: Garden Project

"The garden has been a bridge for the nursery to interact with its parents."

The Equalities Team is on the lookout for projects which include everyone. Here's an account of a nursery that successfully transformed its outdoor space by calling on the help of its children, parents and staff.

A Huntingdon Nursery has made a garden with unusual plantings and creative combinations. Chosen and planted by the children with the help of their parents, the staff have respected play principles. They have empowered children to change their environment in a way that pleases them. They have used the site with imagination, transforming stretches of wire fence with attractive billowing scarves in the wind, and pots and pans attached for children to play with.

The garden has been a bridge for the nursery to interact with its parents. The transformation started in early May. It was done with very little financing, but with plenty of cooperation from parents. The nursery budgeted £1.50 per child. It asked parents to go out and help the child to choose a plant. It then invited parents to the nursery to plant it in the spot that the child had chosen. In addition, parents were asked to help the children decorate a lolly stick at home as a plant marker. The impact was stunning, as children chose unusual combinations of colour and texture.

Through the growing season, children watered and looked after their plants. They asked questions about the plants and enjoyed the different textures, scents and colours. One of the children loved worms and liked to occasionally keep them in his pockets. Parents were also interested in the progress of the nursery garden.

In terms of resources, the nursery prepared compost, flower pots, watering cans, gardening tools, a trellis and canes. There were donations of tomato seedlings, and some parents took

advantage of "two for one" offers to maximise the number of plants that were brought to the nursery. Unexpected benefits were that some garden centres waived payment when they heard about the scheme.

Children were encouraged to grow on seedlings of sunflowers, runner beans and tomatoes. In one home, a parent was puzzled to find that all the sunflowers were neatly cropped at the same height. It turned out that the culprits were sheep from a field nearby, who had helped themselves to the hapless seedlings.

Other features in the garden, included a terracotta bird bath the children had painted themselves; a tub of rustling living grasses; herbs including coriander; and a babies' garden, fenced off with a wooden wall made by the caretaker. The offcuts were planed, and made into wooden rectangles for the children to play with in the garden. Pam Burton, manager, reports that all the staff were very pleased with the project. They had been wishing to do something with their outdoor space and to engage their parents, most of whom are studying at Huntingdon Regional College. The nursery received pointers from its Early Years Foundation Stage Adviser on suggestions for the use of outdoor space.

The Early Years and Childcare Service offers free training on engaging parents in partnership with children's learning. If you'd like to be part of this initiative please contact Jane Choonara at 01223 273340 or jane.choonara@cambridgeshire.gov.uk



Children's Centre and NCMA Joint Training



National Childminding Association (NCMA) and childrens centres in East Cambridgeshire (Bottisham, Ely, Littleport, Soham and Sutton) have been running some hands-on training for childminders.

Workshops have included:

'Working with Cultural Diversity' – a look at Asian culture which included Sikhism, Punjabi Dance and Indian food

'Fun with Wood'* – hands on woodwork for young children

'Storysacks' – exploring interactive storytelling to support language and literacy development

'Sensory play for Children with Special Needs' and **'Baby Sing and Sign'** – helping young children to communicate their needs.

Two daytime sessions for childminders and children to attend together were also included during the summer holidays – **'Playdough to Snowdough'*** and **'Exploring Nature'** at Wicken Fen wildlife reserve.

*Training provided by the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

The training has been very well received by childminders and given them lots of new ideas to enrich their practice. Lesley Scarrow a childminder from Witchford attended 'Fun with Wood' and her minded children now enjoy woodwork in her kitchen area. Lesley was inspired by the training and has purchased child sized tools which the children use under supervision. They enjoy hammering, and using the screwdriver and Lesley finds it is a good outlet for some of the children's energy and creativity.

NCMA and the East Cambridgeshire Children's Centres will be continuing to develop and deliver the training programme during 2010.

"The training has been very well received by childminders and given them lots of new ideas to enrich their practice."

National Science and Engineering Week - 12 to 21 March

For National Science and Engineering Week 2010 the theme is Earth and the British Science Association has produced an activity pack called What on Earth? The pack contains activities on weather, gravity, plants, movement, energy, soil and fossils so there's plenty of choice and scope to choose activities for any age.

An easy idea to start with is growing plants, and children love to watch them grow and develop. Good choices to start with are sunflowers, runner beans, tomatoes or cress and these activities can be extended to link into helping children learn about healthy eating and lifestyles too.

Each year the British Science Association produces a new activity pack inspired by the year's theme. They currently have 13 activity packs for you to choose from.

Visit www.britishsociety.org to find a link to activity packs and details of how to find events in your area.



Childminder News

Childcare Information Service

There may be
funding available
to assist you with
buying resources,
adapting premises
or providing one to
one care.*

It is important that Registered Childminders update their vacancy information with the Childcare Information Service (Opportunity Links) regularly. The information is used along with the Childcare Sufficiency Audit to indicate where there is a need for additional childcare

places. Recruitment is then planned accordingly.

The Childcare Information Service can be contacted on 0845 04 54 014 or you can e-mail them info@opp-links.org.uk.

Childminders – Do You Care for Disabled Children?

If you are looking after a child with a disability or with additional needs, then please contact your Childminding Support and Development Officer (CSDO). We would like to ensure that you are receiving the best possible support in order to offer the best possible care. There may be funding available to assist you with buying resources, adapting premises or providing one to one care.

Childminders and nannies can be well placed to care for disabled children because of their flexibility and home setting. Some childminders feel nervous about agreeing to care for disabled children. They feel they will need a lot of expert knowledge about various impairments and conditions. In fact, this sort of knowledge isn't as important as their existing expertise in offering good quality provision for children. It is their understanding of children's development and how to provide for them which will enable childminders and nannies to include disabled children in their setting.

Working with disabled children

Each child is different and it's important to get to know each child really well as an individual.

To do this, you:

- talk with the child's parents about how best to meet the child's needs
- observe the child, and use what you see and hear to help you understand how the child is developing and what activities and experiences you can offer that will help their development.

These principles hold fast for working with disabled children, just as much as for working with other children. The most important thing to remember is that disabled children are children first – you should focus on the child as an individual and not on their impairment or condition. (This is called the "social model" of disability.)

Gail Hall Memorial Fund

The Gail Hall Memorial Fund offers bursaries to members of NCMA enabling them to undertake training in caring and working with disabled children and children with special educational needs.

For more information visit www.ncma.org.uk

Childminders Supporting Children in Need



Sue Smith and Hannah McCreddie held a fun session for 19 children aged 8 months to 3 years. They decorated Pudsey biscuits whilst raising funds for Children In Need in their pyjamas!



Soham Childminders Jessica Betson and Lucimar De Oliveira Lloyd and their minded children undertook a sponsored fancy dress toddle.

Outcomes Quality and Inclusion Grants

Each of the three childminding Networks in Cambridgeshire (Fenland and East, Cambridge City and South, Huntingdonshire) has successfully applied for an OQI grant. This means that there will be a range of new resources available for Network Childminders to borrow. These resources will be accessed via the CSDO who coordinates each local

network cluster.

If you are interested in providing funded Early Years sessions or Respite Care and would like more information about becoming a Network Childminder please contact your CSDO or the NCMA administrator on 01954 273358.

"The inspector's questions were minimal as she was able to gather much information from the evidence provided."

Outstanding Gradings in Cambridgeshire

Congratulations to Beverly Brigham, Sue Smith, Theresa Hudson and Karen Harwood who have all recently achieved an 'Outstanding' grading from Ofsted.

Sue Smith, a childminder in Ely describes her experience of her recent Ofsted Inspection visit.

"The phone call came; my first thought was 'how will I be ready?'. I can now answer this question.... childminding is a profession which is a work in progress, never complete and each day striving to provide care to complement and enhance children's development.

"Remember that at the heart of every inspection is 'your setting through the eyes of a child'...not only planning for children's interests but an important ingredient is the provision of a warm, caring environment which goes towards ensuring the setting is a place where children will enjoy their return visits and subsequently flourish.

"Staying focussed, assertive, and confident in how you offer your setting is important to remember; every childminder is unique and no two settings are the same; there is no 'right' way to offer or provide care and it is your personal qualities which will help to make you, as a childminder, succeed in your own practice.

"Taking time to gather my thoughts was just the beginning to bring together all my evidence, whether it be in form of photos, policies, permissions or child profiles, parent references or risk assessments to name but a few. For me personally I had many folders containing evidence gathered over the past three years which I wished to show the inspector.

"I welcomed the inspector to the setting. Lasting nearly four hours, the inspection visit was not an

'unpleasant' event and the inspector's questions were minimal as she was able to gather much information from the evidence provided.

"I was very pleasantly surprised that the inspector seemed to look at all the evidence I put forward, and also had the opportunity to see the close relationship I had with the two children who were present for childcare at this time as she watched us at play. Although she passed no comments or judgements as she was being presented with the 'evidence', the inspector did take the time to look at the many display boards I had put together of photograph collages of the children enjoying the many activities and events which showed how I implement the Early Years Foundation Stage.

"Having achieved both Quality First Accreditation and a Level 3 Diploma in Home based Childcare I feel this has helped me to develop my childminding practice....but this day really was the icing on the cake! Being told that I had achieved 'Outstanding' in all areas released a 'waterfall' of emotions and made me realise just how passionate I am about striving to provide the best possible care!

"If I was to give any words of advice before and during an Ofsted Inspection it would have to be to remember to be confident in the service you offer, attend training courses to build on professional development and to accept support from fellow childminders, as well as taking the offer of a 'Buddy' if you feel this would be beneficial.

"I am never complacent and feel that I can always 'do better', and with self-reflection being one of my strong points identified during the Ofsted Inspection, the achievement of this grade really does make the job worthwhile!"

Private Hire Vehicle (PHV) Licensing for Childminders

"The children all

made crescent

shaped biscuits

and ate traditional

Turkish cake."

"Childminders in Cambridgeshire will not currently be required to have a PHV licence in order to transport children in their vehicle".

Further to an article that childminders may have seen in NCMA's 'Who Minds' magazine, some clarification on the local arrangements regarding vehicle licensing.

NCMA contacted the District Councils in Cambridgeshire and following their negotiation it was decided that childminders would not be required to obtain a PHV licence.

Ramadan Celebration

Linda Lunn from Amanda Leech Childminding tells us how the setting celebrated Ramadan.

Linda says 'We celebrated the Muslim festival of Eid with Funda Gunduzalp a childminding assistant at our setting in Godmanchester. Funda gave the children presents of perfume and sweets. The children all made crescent shaped biscuits and ate traditional Turkish cake.

Funda says 'Ramadan is the Muslim month of fasting, in the ninth month of the year. During Ramadan, Muslims are not allowed to eat or drink anything within daylight hours. After sundown they have a meal called 'iftar'. At this meal they eat their

favourite or traditional food. The following morning the fast starts again before sunrise for the next 30 days.

At the end of Ramadan they have a celebration for three days called Eid Ul Fitr. In these days they start eating in daylight hours again. They usually buy new clothes for the family and wear them for the occasion. Children under the age of 18 years usually get pots of sweets and money from their parents, uncles, aunties and grandparents, wrapped in cotton squares. Also on these three days they bake desserts to share with their families, friends and visitors.'



Dates for your Diary

Playday 2010

The Playday 2010 campaign theme will be 'Our Place'. The campaign puts children at the heart of our communities, and asks everyone, young and old, to help create better places for all of us to live and play. The campaign will launch in the New Year, and will build up to Playday on Wednesday 4 August.

Meet and Share

You are invited to join The Childcare and Playwork Team at our...

Meet & Share Evenings 2010

Out of school club and holiday scheme playleaders, playworkers, committee members and club owners are all invited to join us to take the opportunity to:

- Relax after a busy day at an informal evening allowing you to chat to others over coffee and biscuits
- Meet and chat with other clubs and Early Years and Childcare Service support teams, ask questions and exchange ideas of good practice around relevant areas of practice i.e. EYFS, Risk assessments, Activities for older children etc
- Refresh your knowledge about completing the 'logging a concern form' with guest speaker Sandra Papworth from the Education Child Protection Service

Where and When

Tuesday 23 Feb 7 - 9pm
Dragonfly Den Children's Club
62A High Street, Sutton CB6 2RA

Monday 29 March 7 - 9pm
Whittlesford Out of School Club, William Westley C of E Primary School, Whittlesford CB22 4NE

Wednesday 5 May 7 - 9pm
Godmanchester Kids Club, Godmanchester Primary School, Godmanchester PE29 2AG

How to book

Please email or phone your Childcare and Playwork Adviser (CAPA) to book places in advance as this helps us judge how many people are coming (see details below). But if you are free to come along at the last minute please just turn up as we would love to see you!

Childcare and Playwork Adviser (CAPA) Contact Details...

Fenland: Pam Abram
Tel: 07824 623880
Email: pam.abram@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

North Huntingdonshire: Allison Stewart
Tel: 07826 891292
Email: allison.stewart@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

South Huntingdonshire: Heather Jebb
Tel: 07917 068211
Email: heather.jebb@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Cambridge City: Theresa Cansdale
Tel: 07776 161771
Email: theresa.cansdale@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

South Cambridgeshire: Julia Sudbury
Tel: 07824 623870
Email: julia.sudbury@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

East Cambridgeshire:
Verity Windmill and Allison Stewart
Verity Tel: 07825 934232
Email: verity.windmill@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Allison Tel: 07826 891292
Email: allison.stewart@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Festival of Playwork 2010

(previously known as Just Play)

We are pleased to announce that the Festival of Playwork Conference will take place on Saturday 13 March 2010 at Godmanchester Community Primary School. This year the event has been organised in partnership with Meynell Games (a national organisation which promotes better play opportunities for children) and we hope you find the new format fun and informative.

All settings should have received a programme for the event and a booking slip (by email and post). However, if you have not received the information please let your CAPA know and we will happily send the information through. The usual training course booking fee of £10 per delegate applies and bookings will be taken until Wednesday 3 March by the Workforce Development Team (training team).

continued overleaf...

"The Festival of

Playwork

Conference will

take place on

Saturday 13 March

2010."

Childcare and Playwork News

Dates for your Diary **Festival of Playwork 2010** ...continued

"The centre places
the promotion of
equality of
opportunity at the
heart of all its
work."

Making the most of the day - In a change to previous years you will be asked to make your workshop choices on arrival at the conference. To ensure that each setting receives the maximum benefit from the day we recommend that staff

attend different workshops and feed back new skills and information learned to their colleagues at team meetings etc

The CAPA team looks forward to seeing you!

Outstanding Setting



Staff at Crosshall are celebrating after receiving an overall Outstanding judgement from Ofsted following their inspection in early December. The after school care is part of the Crosshall Children's Centre which provides a nursery class, full wrap around care, as well as the breakfast, after school and holiday club.

The inspector Lynn Clements praised the setting regarding their work on equalities stating that:

'The centre places the promotion of equality of opportunity at the heart of all its work. Adults are highly effective in ensuring that all children are well integrated and the developments of all children in relation to their starting points and capabilities is very good'.

She also noted that the staff promote a child-led environment, which positively encourages child participation and they have strong relationships with parents and carers:

'The centre has highly positive and purposeful relationships with all groups of parents and carers Children too are fully involved in the centre, through for example the children's council'.

The report also acknowledges that ' High expectations and standards are embedded across all areas of practice. As a result, outcomes in the children's achievements and well-being for all children are exceptionally high'.

Jo Gowling, the manager of the wrap around care, breakfast, after school and holiday clubs said, 'Everything is completely accessible to all our children, we have a full range of resources to cover 3 - 11 year olds', and her deputy Bekki Skinn said 'I feel really proud of us, and all that we have achieved'.

Jo and her team are proud of what they have achieved, and would love to show you around the setting. If you would like to visit Crosshall, please contact either Jo or Bekki on 01480 219518.

Well done to you all!

Quality Framework

School Run Provisions – have you had your annual Quality Framework monitoring visit yet?

If not, your CAPA will be in touch soon.....

General Reminder

Reminder to all settings! Have you reviewed your emergency policies and procedures, specifically around what to do if bad weather means the

closure of your setting? And are all your emergency contact details up to date?

Children's Participation (2)

This is the second in a series of articles focusing on children's participation and how you can get more children involved with making decisions that affect them in their club.

The focus in this instalment is on how we support the delivery of participation, with examples of the different methods that can be implemented within an out of school setting.

There are lots of different methods that can be used to encourage children to be involved with making decisions, including:

Written questions

Generally consultation and participation go hand in hand, and both tend to begin with questions. (Although you may not consult with written questions). When planning participation you are likely to begin with 'what', 'when' and 'how' questions, which could be delivered through a basic written questionnaire similar to the type used in the Childcare and Playwork Team's consultation.

Once you have decided which questions you are going to use, you will need to decide how to request your answers, such as offering multiple choice/ratings answers or asking for comments, or a mixture of the two.

Expression faces can be used to help support children to judge their response.

Disadvantages of multiple choice and ratings answers are that you are not providing the opportunity for true expression, although the answers are easier to collate.

Playing games

Once the 'questions' have been identified, if they are multiple choice answers you may be able to deliver this in a game format like the one below.

Traffic Lights

Aim - The aim of this game is to identify children's opinions on the level of participation they have at their out of school setting through a series of questions directed to children in a fun way.

Who? - Small (no less than 4) to large group of children of all ages and abilities.

Where? - Indoors/outdoors. Ideally need a minimum space of approx. 30 square metres (325 square feet), with room for groups of children to move about freely.

Resources - Space, facilitator, A4 sheets of paper and marker pen /coloured cones x 3. Ready made questions.

Method

Preparation - Decide on your questions. Identify areas to be known as 'yes', 'no' and 'don't know', using the cones or A4 sheets of paper. These could be colour coded as in traffic lights.

How? - Ask the group to respond to your questions by running/walking/sliding/hopping/jumping to the appropriate answer/colour.

Evaluation of answers - Log children's decisions throughout the game.

Computers

All children have knowledge of computers and a lot of clubs now have access to at least one computer, which they make available for the children to use. This can be a great tool for encouraging children to share their views and opinions, which lead to them being involved to making decisions.

If money is no object you can purchase interactive programmes that allow children to answer questions with just a couple of clicks on the cursor, and the programme will collate and review the answers.

However for the majority of settings, buying in a programme is not viable, so we need to look at other ways a computer can be used to identify what it is children want.

Children can write up their own questions to ask one another or the staff. They can then either be printed off and passed around to be completed, or the questions can be answered on the computer itself. Using a programme like 'Microsoft Access' you can also collate the results of any consultation.

Children can be encouraged to use a computer to write and publish their own termly newsletters.

"Children can
write up their
own questions to
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or the staff."

continued overleaf...

Children's Participation (2) ...continued

"Children could
role play as a
'roaming reporter',
asking members
of the club their
opinions on
various aspects."

Using clip art, children can design the environment, identifying the colour scheme, where they would like play areas to be placed within the setting etc.

Using a search engine such as 'Google' or 'Ask Jeeves', children can identify trips they may like to go on, new games and resources and even help do the club snack shop through internet shopping.

The way a PC can be used in participation is as endless as a child's imagination!

Recordings

With the use of a camera (either a stills or video one), children can express themselves in lots of ways. They can take pictures of things they like or don't like, then compile a scrapbook, which can be supported with the children's words, written by the children or the staff.

The children can record a play that they put together, showing how they would like to be involved in decision making. For example, a drama production around being involved with the club's rule making and the consequences of any

actions for anyone who may go against the rules.

Children could role play as a 'roaming reporter' asking members of the club their opinions on various aspects. A voice recorder could be used for this if you don't have any cameras, then it could be played back within a 'radio show'.

Drama

If you have a group of children who enjoy drama, they could be encouraged to express themselves in a mini production that they put together, or within other role play activities, such as dolls or puppets.

The Childcare and Playwork Team is working on a 'participation pack' containing guidance on promoting participation in out of school childcare settings. This will be sent to all out of school providers in due course. In it, you will be able to read a detailed account of a pilot study conducted by the Thomas Coram Research Unit, Institute of Education, London. This study used methods as described above to good effect, with very interesting results.

Chancellor's Christmas Card Competition Winner

...Well Done Lucy Waller of Buccaneers!



Last term the children of Buccaneers entered a competition run by the Daycare Trust to design a Christmas e-card for the Chancellor of the

Exchequer. The winning entry would be used by the Chancellor and his wife as their official Christmas card which they would send to over 1,500 people in the UK and across the world.

We were delighted when Lucy Waller (aged 10) was chosen out of 400 entries as one of the finalists and she was invited to 11 Downing Street along with her parents and the Manager of Buccaneers, Carol Klein, to hear the announcement of the winner.

The children were entertained by a magician and then Mrs. Darling announced that Lucy was the winner in the '8 and over' category. She was awarded a trophy, a £50 voucher and a goody bag. Buccaneers also received £200 of N E S Arnold vouchers. It was an evening to remember - even Alastair Darling made an appearance to congratulate Lucy! Buccaneers are very proud of her.

Free-flow from Pre-School to the Garden Cambridge Day Nursery Rising to the Challenge

At our 46 place day nursery our pre-school is upstairs on the first floor. This meant achieving free-flow to and from the garden was a problem. We thought long and hard about how we could ensure the children could access the garden without increasing the risk factor for them.

We came up with an idea that has worked really well for us:

In the past we have free-flowed across two rooms on the first floor and the children were very good at placing their photograph on the door of the room they were playing in, so we extended this activity to the door at the top of the stairs.

Children are asked to press a bell, which we have situated at the top of the staircase, to alert the staff member in the garden they are on their way down and to inform the member of staff when they arrive safely in the garden.

The final part of setting up free-flow was to talk about the risks of going up and down stairs with the children. The children came up with their own risks and rules for going up and down the stairs, including putting coats, hats, gloves and boots on when it was cold in the garden. We then had the children's risk assessment typed up and displayed with photographs of the children implementing the free-flow, step by step, at an appropriate height for the children.

For the first week or so we regularly talked about our risk assessment and free-flow with the children before opening the garden during the day, but now we have reduced the conversations to once or twice a week as the children demonstrate a very good understanding of how the free-flow system works.

The benefits of this have been huge, mainly because the children are able to choose where they wish to learn, whether it be in the pre-school environment or the garden. They now enjoy going out, as it is when they want to rather than when we tell them to.

Over the past few weeks behaviour within the group has improved as we have given the children the opportunity to make decisions about where they play and learn; this has also been reflected in their play and social skills. Interactions are more positive and children spend a longer period of time at chosen activities, which enables them to engage in periods of sustained thinking and extend their learning.

The older children have developed a more caring attitude towards the younger children in the room, reminding them about how to keep safe when they are going down the stairs, insisting that they follow the risk assessment procedure they have set in place.

"The benefits of this have been huge, mainly because the children are able to choose where they wish to learn."

Parental Responsibility

Due to recent changes in regulations brought about by the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework, early years settings are now required to maintain a record of the person with parental responsibility for every child in their care. Sometimes, parents no longer live together due to divorce or a breakdown of relationships and practitioners are sometimes not sure whether or not to release children into the care of parents in conflict.

To help you to make the right decision and to clarify what is meant in law by the term 'Parental

Responsibility' (as defined in The Children Act, 1989), The Children's Legal Centre has a free information fact sheet which answers a range of common questions and gives advice on what to do in a variety of different situations. The leaflet is available in different languages.

For further information on Parental Responsibility log onto:
www.childrenslegalcentre.com
Phone: 01206 872466
Or email: clc@essex.ac.uk

Early Years Philosophies in Focus

"Montessori was

the founder of

child centred

education; she

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adult as one of

supporting the

child."

Children's care and learning have long been the subject of debate, with a whole range of different views on what 'good practice' looks like. These views have changed over time and differ according to the culture in which we operate. For example, 'good practice' in a setting in China will look very different to 'good practice' in Cambridge for a variety of reasons.

For us, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) draws on a wide range of views as well as up to date research findings, to provide us with four Principles, which underpin the work we do with children:

- "Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured."
- "Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person."
- "The environment plays a key role in supporting children's development and learning."
- "Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected."

These Principles are grouped into four Themes, and guide the work of practitioners in early years settings. In order to raise awareness of how the EYFS fits in with other early years perspectives, over the coming year we intend to take a look at a range of familiar philosophies and consider what this means for children's learning.

A Look at Montessori

Many people have heard of Montessori but perhaps know little about her, or the method of education that she developed. Maria Montessori was ahead of her time, a true pioneer. Born in 1870, she was the first woman to graduate from the University of Rome medical school in 1896 and through her work with children became interested in education. Her early work was with children with special educational needs and children of working parents in a disadvantaged area of Rome.

Through her observations of children she began to design and commission materials and equipment, she was the first educator to provide child sized furniture. She saw that children learn by doing and recognised that young children have an amazing capacity to absorb information. It was the children who led her to develop her theories and method of teaching; meeting their needs was her priority. Montessori was the founder of child centred education; she saw the role of the adult as one of supporting the child, 'help me to do it for myself' remains a mantra.

It is over a hundred years since she opened her first Children's House but her insights and approach remain relevant today. Looking at the themes and principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and considering the Montessori perspective reinforces her pioneer status, and demonstrates how the two sit together.

A Unique Child

Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Montessori perspective

Respect for the child and acknowledgement that each child has a hidden potential links directly with the principles of the Unique Child. Seen as citizens of the world and encouraged to take an active role in their environment, young children are able to progress according to their individual needs and interests.

Positive Relationships

Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person

Montessori perspective

Parents are acknowledged as the child's foremost educator and are encouraged to spend time observing in the setting. Children are able to spend time exploring and investigating their environment, getting to know other children and adults alike. Vertical grouping assists the settling in process and learning and development alike.

Early Years Philosophies in Focus ...continued

Enabling Environments

The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.

Montessori perspective

The Prepared Environment offers consistency and freedom of choice. The child is able to select activities and materials in accordance with their individual needs and interests that support their Sensitive Periods. Observations are used to extend children's learning within schemes of work.

Learning and Development

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected.

Montessori perspective

Children may work on their own and in small groups and are encouraged, but not required, to take part in group work if they don't want to. All areas of the learning environment are available to the child. The Work Cycle enables children to engage in different activities whilst offering opportunities to consolidate and refine skills.

"What would you

do if another

person collected

the child and

forgot to tell the

parent about the

injury?"

And Finally....Some Famous Montessorians: ● Anne Frank ● Jeff Bezos (founder of Amazon)
● Larry Page and Sergey Brin (founders of Google) ● Prince William and Prince Harry

Focus on the Early Years Foundation Stage in Practice

Safeguarding

EYFS sets out a Specific Legal Requirement for settings to keep a record of accidents and first aid treatment (Statutory Framework for the EYFS p26 **Illnesses and Injuries**). It goes on to say that "Providers must inform parents of any accidents or injuries sustained by the child whilst in the care of the providers..." Whilst the requirement no longer specifies that parents' signature of acknowledgement needs to form a part of these accident and first aid records, it is worth asking yourself the following questions and updating or amending your current accident records to reflect your responses:

- If necessary, how can you evidence that you have informed parents of the accident? For example, if the child sustained an injury that seemed minor at the time but later transpired to be more serious in nature and had a serious impact upon the child's health, such a head injury;
- What would you do if another person collected the child and forgot to tell the parent about the injury? How would you evidence that you had passed on the necessary information?
- Since you are required to 'inform parents' how do you evidence that you have a secure and

effective system to do exactly this when another person collects the child?

- Is it enough to just tell the person who collects and rely upon them to pass on the information when the regulation requires the provider to inform parents?

Suitable Persons

Providers must have effective systems in place to ensure that persons having contact with children are suitable to do so (Statutory Framework for the EYFS p29 Suitable People). As part of the process of ensuring that people are suitable, the provider must obtain an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure for all persons aged 16 or over who either work with the children or live/work on the premises when children are present.

You should be mindful that there is also a specific legal requirement to "keep records of the information they have used to assess suitability to demonstrate to Ofsted that checks have been done...records must include the Unique Reference Number of the CRB Disclosures obtained and the date on which they were obtained".

Early Years News

Ofsted Changes Update

"The changes will make closer links with the inspection framework for schools."

As reported in the last issue of Jigsaw, some changes have been made to the Early Years Inspection framework, which came into effect on 1 September 2009. Ofsted does not anticipate that the changes will have a significant impact on inspections because they will not involve inspectors collecting additional evidence or spending longer in settings. However, the changes will make closer links with the new inspection framework for schools, which also started in September, so that the judgements on the Early Years Foundation Stage are the same

across both schools and registered childcare settings.

To help you to be ready for the new inspection and the additional judgements you might want to download a copy of the latest publication of 'Conducting Early Years Inspections' (ref No: 080164) which is available online at www.ofsted.gov.uk. A copy of the publication can also be requested by calling Ofsted on 08456 404040 if you do not have internet access.

Childcare Information Service News

New Website for Childcare Information Service



Families and Childcare Information Services

From the old...

Recent national changes made by DCSF mean that the ChildcareLink website no longer exists. Childcare information now uploads to Direct.gov together with information about other services for families and young people in each local authority area. Direct.gov displays information in a different way from ChildcareLink and the search function also works differently.

<http://childcarefinder.direct.gov.uk/childcarefinder>

To the new...

In view of these changes, and to provide a wider range of information and improved user experience, the CIS has redesigned its website www.opportunity-links.org.uk.

This includes:

- a more user-friendly way of searching and displaying childcare information
- easy-to-use online forms for updating your details and posting job adverts
- a wider range of information.

Do use this site to check your details and to find out about other initiatives that may be of interest to you and the parents that you work with.

We'll be building the site content over the coming months and hope that you will like the changes; tell us what you think through the online form. We're always keen to hear your opinions.

First Sufficiency Assessment Update Online – Thank you!

As you'll be aware, the first online Sufficiency Assessment update took place before Christmas.

We would like to thank you for submitting your returns. This update will be carried out every term and by the time you receive this copy of Jigsaw, another will be well under way.

We're hoping that even more online submissions will be received this time around and have

worked hard to iron out any initial glitches that were experienced during the pilot phase.

A date for your diary!

The summer term online assessment is 26 April-14 May. Please help us with timely returns. Jade is your key contact in the team and is on hand to assist with any queries on 0845 04 54 014 or info@opp-links.org.uk.

To all grandparents out there – BeGrand!

BeGrand.net

the website for grandparents

BeGrand.net is a new website that provides information and advice and a community for grandparents.

Why Grandparents?

Grandparents are more important in modern family life than ever...

- 60% of grandparents see one of their grandchildren at least once a week.
- A third of parents turn to their parents for advice before any other source of information.
- Even teenagers still listen to them: 80% say their grandmothers give 'good advice'.
- 1 in 4 are buying essentials for their new grandchildren.
- Age Concern put the cost of the childcare they provide at £3.9 billion.
- Others put it as high as £50 billion.

But grandparenting is about much more than just practical support: the monetary value of grandparents' time can be measured. What can't

be measured is the love and support they offer to children. BeGrand.net will celebrate that passion and help them fully enjoy one of the most special – yet undervalued – relationships that exists in society.

The site will combine grandparent-focused information and advice (from fun activities to serious legal issues) with a community where grandparents can find friends and share problems, advice and ideas. They can set up profiles and get information personalised to their location and interests. If you're a grandparent yourself do have a look and if you know any – pass this information on. It's a really useful source of support.

Launched on January 26 BeGrand is a partnership between Opportunity Links, the Grandparents Association and Digital Unite (of Silver Surfers Day fame). The project is part of the government-funded Parent Know How Programme which, via its Innovation fund, uses new and existing media channels to deliver information and support for children and families.

"Age Concern
puts the cost
of the childcare
grandparents
provide at
£3.9 billion."



Diary dates...



March 2010

Sat 13 **Festival of Playwork Conference**
Sat 20 **Equalities Conference for childminders**

April 2010

2 – 18 **School Easter holiday**
26 April **Online Sufficiency Survey**
14 May

May 2010

31 May **Summer half-term break**
4 June

June 2010

Tues 08 **Conference for Equalities Named Coordinators (ENCo)**

Editorial Contacts:

Early Years and Childcare Service

Libby Cull - Tel: 01954 273360
email: libby.cull@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Out of School Clubs

Verity Windmill - Tel: 01954 273365
email: verity.windmill@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Pre-school Learning Alliance

Gary Croxon - Tel: 01954 231751
email: gary.croxon@pre-school.org.uk

Childminding

Laura Rutterford - Tel: 01353 777022
email: laura.rutterford@ncma.org.uk

Infrastructure Service

Jemma Keegan - Tel: 01954 283373
email: jemma.keegan@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Early Years and Childcare Service Contacts:

Unit 3, Bar Hill Business Park
Saxon Way, Bar Hill
Cambridgeshire CB23 8SL

Tel: 01954 273360

Fax: 01954 273351

email: eycinfo@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/childcare

Training and Qualification Contacts:

For queries about training or qualifications tel: 01954 273355/273359

If you would like a copy of the text in this publication in large print, Braille,
audio tape or in another language, please call Libby Cull on 01954 273360



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Issue 33 February 2010 CONTENTS

2-6

General News

6-8

Development News

9-11

Childcare Business and
Employer Support News

11-14

Workforce Development News

15-18

Equalities and Inclusion News

19-22

Childminder News

23-26

Childcare and Playwork News

27-30

Early Years News

30-31

Childcare Information Service

32

Diary Dates and Editorial Contacts